

## BOOK REVIEW

Kathleen Yerger Johnstone. 1970. *Collecting Seashells*. Grosset and Dunlap, 198 pp., 6 colored plates, many figures. \$5.95.

Mrs. Johnstone introduces the reader, particularly the amateur, to the delights of the hobby of collecting shells—the Shell Game as it is known to thousands of enthusiasts, professional and beginner alike. Almost exclusively treating marine mollusks, she discusses all classes of the Phylum mentioning too that mollusks also live in terrestrial and freshwater habitats. An inviting introduction to scientific nomenclature dismisses the common bugaboo concerning Latin names.

Sound advice to beginners includes chapters on how, where and with what to collect, and what to do with your trophies once you have got them. Rightful concern for an undisturbed environment and its conservation is expressed.

More detailed discussions are accorded the argonauts, species of *Conus*, and the crown conch. The paper nautilus is handsomely figured in color and the fascinating facets of its life history, including its unusual reproductive behavior, are described. Recent discoveries about the biology of cones are presented. These remarkable snails are armed with a radula which harpoons, immobilizes or kills its prey; on occasion the venom of cones has been fatal to man. Aspects of dispersal figure importantly in the geographic distribution of the crown conch, *Melongena*, which Mrs. Johnstone treats in some detail.

In Australia's gold rush days, 'to fossick' meant to prospect; today's fossicker roams the reefs, tide flats and beaches in search of the rich excitement provided by the sea and its shells. A picturesque word, in reading this book, is added to the vocabulary of those who have suffered from the Sanibel Bends.

K. J. Boss